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RUEHIHL/REO HILLAH 0747

C O N F I D E N T I A L HILLAH 000128

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: BABIL GOVERNOR AND PROVINCIAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN PRESS REO  
HILLAH FOR THE REMOVAL OF GENERAL QAIS

REF: HILLAH 0125

CLASSIFIED BY: Douglas Meurs, Acting Regional Coordinator, REO  
Al Hillah, US Department of State.  
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

1. (C) Summary: Babil Governor Al-Musalamawi called an emergency meeting with REO staff on July 27 to discuss various security issues brewing in the province. He was joined by Provincial Council Chairman (PCC) Mohammed Ali Hussein Al-Masoudi. The main point of issue raised during the meeting was their perception that the REO is obstructing their campaign to have General Qais Hamza Aboud Al-Momouri dismissed as Babil Chief of Police. Both men exhibited frustration at General's Qais continued employment in the province to the point where the governor cautioned that he might be forced to resign if General Qais was to remain in his position as Babil Chief of Police. End Summary

2. (C) REO staff met at the request of Governor Al-Musalamawi and the PCC, Mohammed Ali Hussein Al-Masoudi, to discuss nonspecific pressing security concerns in the province. Comment: REO staff suspected that this meeting was called to discuss the ongoing saga surrounding the attempted removal of General Qais as Babil Chief of Police (reftel). End Comment. Both men asserted that rumors abound within Hillah that the Americans, specifically the REO, had been instrumental in helping General Qais maintain his position as Babil Chief of Police, thus thwarting the efforts on the part of the Provincial Council (PC) to oust him. They went on to add that this perception was dangerous and was serving to undermine their authority as Babil's elected leaders. They insisted that the PC needed the support of the REO and that "relationships are not built on certain individuals but on nations." PCC requested that the REO publicly support the PC's decision to remove General Qais as this action would serve to put a cap on the aforementioned rumors.

3. (C) The PCC insisted that an independent would be chosen to replace General Qais and that the current structure of the police department would remain in place. The Deputy Regional Coordinator (DRC) questioned why they would feel the need to remove the current police chief, who is an independent, and also the man who played an integral role in developing the current structure of the police force, but neither the governor nor PCC presented any specific reasons for the needed removal of General Qais. DRC informed the men that the General Qais issue is an internal matter between them and the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and regardless of whom the Ministry appoints as the Chief of Police, the REO would support and work with dually elected and appointed members of the government. Both men appeared frustrated by General Qais' staying power and near the conclusion of the meeting the governor lamented that he may need to resign if General Qais remained in place as Babil Chief of

Police. Comment: There is little doubt that the governor was simply posturing when he warned of his possible resignation. Frankly, REO staff were a bit baffled as to how the threat of resignation would cause the REO to reevaluate its position on General Qais. End Comment.

14. (C) Also, during the course of the meeting, the PCC requested that the USG, on behalf of the Provincial Council, pressure the MOI for funds needed for the establishment of a robust intelligence unit within the province. He suggested that they would need between three and four hundred men along with cars and motorcycles if they were going to field a viable intelligence unit. DRC informed them that the REO is not in a position to intervene in budgetary matters between the MOI and the province. Comment: REO staff is not prepared to entertain this ludicrous request. At this time, established police and coalition forces are adequately maintaining the peace. The possibility exists that Governor Al-Musalamawi was extending a deal; General Qais keeps his job in exchange for a new cadre of hand-picked intelligence officers reporting to the Governor. End Comment.

MEURS